

- (3) Carrington, Hereward, *The Story of Psychic Science* (London, Rider & Co. 1930).
- (4) Edmunds, Simeon, '*Spirit*' *Photography* (London, Society for Psychical Research, 1965).
- (5) Fukurai, T., *Clairvoyance and Thoughtography* (London, Rider and Co. 1931).
- (6) Hyslop, James, *Proceedings: A.S.P.R.*, 1914 (resumé in Carrington's *Modern Psychical Phenomena* (New York, Dodd and Mead, 1919).
- (7) Sheargold, Richard, Review of Edmunds' '*Spirit*' *Photography* (*International Journal of Parapsychology*, Vol. VII, No. 4).
- (8) See p. 136 of Carrington's *Modern Psychical Phenomena* (New York, Dodd and Mead, 1919).

SIR,—Mr Rogo describes his letter as 'A Reply to Simeon Edmunds'. It is in fact a complaint that in '*Spirit*' *Photography*¹ I did not mention certain practitioners and did not refer to some persons who were unable to detect fraud when investigating alleged spirit photographers. It is not a reasoned reply to my thesis, which was:

'Every spirit photographer who has been thoroughly and competently investigated has been proved fraudulent. No reliable record appears to exist of a definitely recognized spirit extra being obtained on any photograph under completely fraudproof conditions. Every spirit photograph submitted to expert examination could, in the absence of fraudproof conditions, have been produced, either deliberately or accidentally, by normal photographic processes. Therefore, while it cannot be proved that spirit photography is impossible, there appears to be no real evidence to warrant rational belief in such a phenomenon.'

I shall confine comment on Mr Rogo's letter to what is left when all the suggestive adjectives ('regrettable', 'unfortunate', 'disappointing', 'irritating', etc.) and the irrelevant matter (what I have written elsewhere about Eusapia Palladino² and unspecified criticisms by a reviewer of unstated qualifications) are disregarded.

Mr Rogo first criticises my omission of favourable reports of experiments with Hope, Mrs Buxton, and Mrs Deane made by Hereward Carrington. Apart from the fact that I do not think

¹ Published in 1965. From 'recent' some might infer that it had just appeared.

² Contrary to Mr Rogo's allegation, Hereward Carrington is mentioned in my book, *Spiritualism: a Critical Survey*. On pp. 108-9 I state that he was one of the team sent by the S.P.R. to test Palladino at Naples and refer to his knowledge of conjuring. I describe their report as 'certainly the most remarkable paper ever published by serious researchers in this field'. I also list a number of eminent investigators who believed Palladino sometimes produced genuine phenomena.

Carrington was a particularly critical investigator, the fact that J. Hewat McKenzie¹ assisted in these experiments is in my view enough to damn them. McKenzie was a Spiritualist and not a researcher, about whom Dr Eric Dingwall² has written:

'He had not the slightest idea of the real meaning of scientific work, and possessed but little appreciation of what constitutes good evidence. The mediums who visited the College had to be paid, and the sitters had to pay to see them, so it was unlikely that McKenzie would be so strict against the mediums as to frighten them away, but he did endeavour to take such precautions as he himself thought adequate. His treatment of the spirit photographer, William Hope, was typical. Although it was strongly suspected that Hope never produced any genuine psychic effects, Mr McKenzie defended him vehemently, and, when looking into Hope's bag, found apparatus for producing these frauds, published nothing about it, and the facts only emerged long afterwards.'

Mr Rogo then complains that I did not refer to the work of Fukurai. As I made clear in its opening paragraphs, my monograph was concerned specifically with 'spirit' photography, not with the much broader subject of 'psychic' photography in general. Fukurai's work was mainly connected with 'thoughtography', not spirit photography. For the same reason, had I written *'Spirit Photography'* at a later date, the work of Eisenbud with Serios would not have been considered in it. The difference is important: 'spirit' photography, unlike 'thoughtography', etc., is directly related to the question of survival, and consequently many people get emotional about it.

I did not refer to Mrs Buxton specifically because she generally took a minor role as Hope's assistant, and in any case, it is manifestly impossible in a short outline to mention more than some of the best known of the many alleged spirit photographers.

On the question of Mrs Deane's Armistice Day photographs it is true that Sir Arthur Keith did not agree with the photographic experts, but is it not significant that after this exposure no more Armistice Day pictures came from Mrs Deane. I fail to see why in quoting Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's statement of his misgivings about her I am being 'less than just to Mrs Deane', and the self-

¹ McKenzie founded and ran the 'British College of Psychic Science', now defunct and not to be confused with the CPS at Queensberry Place, London. He also wrote a book, *Spirit Intercourse*, which contains tables and diagrams purporting to show the relative distance from the earth of various 'spiritual spheres'.

² *J. Hewat McKenzie: Pioneer of Psychical Research*, by Muriel Hankey, Aquarian Press, London, 1963, p. 139.

styled 'Professor' James Coates was discredited so frequently that his testimony is quite worthless.

Mr Rogo makes a serious allegation when he states: 'Even with contemporary exposures, Mr Edmunds distorts the facts.' This comment is completely unfounded. The most recent exposure of a spirit photographer mentioned in my monograph was that of John Myers by Lord Donegall in 1935, which can hardly be described as contemporary.

It is Mr Rogo who mis-states the facts concerning this exposure. The 'trick' to which Mr Rogo says Lord Donegall 'confessed' was arranging that Myers should use the set of prepared plates by which he was caught. Lord Donegall has assured me that he has always maintained Myers was fraudulent. In 1965, in a review of *He Walks in Two Worlds: The Story of John Myers*,¹ Lord Donegall wrote: 'Myers certainly walked in two worlds in the sense that he transferred his activities to the USA.'

Mr Rogo is irritated at what he calls my 'rash generalization' that if there are persons who possess the gift of spirit photography one might expect some of the multitude of ordinary snapshotters to produce spirit 'extras'. It would have been easier to answer him had he stated *why* he found it irritating and thought it rash. He claims that it can be rebutted on several grounds, but he does not give them. He merely claims that with many famous spirit photographers the extras first appeared spontaneously, but gives no evidence of this. They certainly claimed that this happened, but that is all.

In the case of Mrs White it is impossible to form a reasoned opinion on the information given by Mr Rogo. More information about the way the negatives were 'analysed' by the un-named professional photographer and details of his qualifications would be particularly interesting. But doubtless Mr Rogo will submit a full report to the Society and arrange for the negatives to be inspected by members with technical photographic knowledge.²

The 'psychological point' I am accused of failing to take seems to be that because researchers (Mr Rogo should have referred to *some* researchers) have sought to convince sceptics that even genuine mediums will consciously cheat, spirit photographers who have been proved fraudulent are therefore sometimes genuine. How very odd. I am also accused of failing to differentiate between proof of fraud and a charge of fraud, but again no example of my having done this is given.

¹ *Sherlock Holmes Journal*, Spring, 1965.

² As a licentiate member of the Institute of Incorporated Photographers, I for one would welcome the opportunity to examine these negatives.

Mr Rogo refers to 'various inaccuracies and omissions'. He states that I ignore the Society for the Study of Supernormal Pictures. In fact I not only mention it, but point out that its former secretary, Fred Barlow, later became convinced that spirit photography was entirely fraudulent (pp. 8-9). He also states that I make no mention of the favourable opinion of Hope held by Sir William Crookes and Sir William Barrett. In fact I refer to both as being convinced of Hope's genuine-ness and give the references (p. 7).

Mr Rogo does not seem to appreciate that even when a spirit photographer or some other kind of 'physical' medium cannot be proved fraudulent this does not mean that he is therefore genuine. When we see a demonstration of conjuring we do not believe that the young lady in the box is really sawn in halves just because we cannot see how the trick is done. In fact the competent investigation of alleged spirit photography requires expert knowledge of trickery and sleight-of-hand as well as expert knowledge of photography, and opinions not based on such knowledge are of little value.

Reasoned criticism, which can be of benefit to all, is welcomed by any writer who aims to be factual. Mr Rogo's letter, however, contains so many unfounded allegations and such disregard for the facts that it is of no benefit to anybody. Like any brief work '*Spirit Photography*' has its faults of omission, and I am only too well aware of other shortcomings. But they are not of the kind insinuated by Mr Rogo.

SIMEON EDMUNDS

Autosuggestion and Hallucination

SIR,—In the December 1967 issue of the Journal, I was interested to read a review of Alexandra David-Neel's *Magic and Mystery in Tibet* by Julian Duguid.

A comparable experience outside Tibet and without Oriental rituals is related by the well-known academic psychologist George H. Estabrooks in his book *Hypnotism* (Museum Press Ltd., London, 1959, p. 93-4). Discussing autosuggestion, he relates his own experience:

'The writer had a "pet" polar bear which he was able to call up merely by counting to five. . . . But autosuggestion has a certain menace which this phantom bear illustrated. He became so familiar that he refused to go away. . . . It was fully a month before the writer felt quite sure that his ghostly form would not be grinning at him over the foot of the bed during a thunderstorm.'

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